

HORNCASTLE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report
of the
Medical Officer of Health
1954

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL

Medical Officer of Health

S.A. O'HAGAN, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.R.

Sanitary Inspector

F.W. HARPER, A.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

Additional Sanitary Inspector

H. SMITH, A.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

The Medical Officer is also Medical Officer of Horncastle Urban District and Woodhall Sp. Urban District Councils. He is also Assistant County Medical Officer.

The Sanitary Inspector is also Building Inspector and Meat Inspector.

The General Purposes Committee deals with matters affecting Public Health.

To The Chairman and Members
Horncastle Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman and Members,

I have the honour to present my annual report for 1954. The major tasks which have been the concern of my department during the year have been the Housing Survey and preparations for the comprehensive water scheme.

You will recall that, owing to staff limitations, only houses recorded as class 4 and class 5 in the earlier survey, were inspected and it was resolved to replace all of those found unfit. Inevitably this will be costly and by the time it is completed, a further batch of irreparably decayed dwellings will await replacement.

We are in a phase of reorganization of the countryside. No longer will the country worker have to live beside a damp spot in which a well can be sunk, or necessarily absolutely 'on the job'. The tied cottage is still with us but is eased somewhat by the 'tied Council house' together with improved facilities for transport.

The general tendency is however, is for people to seek the amenities of larger villages, and this in spite of the great extension of electricity and water services. This tendency cannot be thwarted but might be guided by a survey of the labour needs of the parishes and the systematic development of amenities where there appears to be a need for long-term labour. In this the County Council's development plan is closely involved, for as School Medical Officer one is closely aware of both advantages and disadvantages in closing small schools, the accessibility of a good primary school may be a factor to guide many good farm workers in choosing jobs.

The end of the year saw the Council still burdened with worn out hatted camps, which although reduced in size, still house a considerable number of families for whom no houses are yet available. Some short term improvement will be effected by the acquisition of the Officer's Married Quarters at Coningsby. There still remains a demand for temporary housing albeit of a very poor standard, and I cannot easily foresee when this demand will cease.

Caravans have come into considerable use as temporary housing and can be satisfactory for a considerable period, although initial cost and maintenance costs are apt to be high if reasonable amenities are provided and maintained. In general it is the higher income group who choose caravans as temporary dwellings and amongst these the risks involved are understood and precautions taken.

The large family nowadays is less common than formerly but there are enough of them to be a problem to the housing authority. Powers recently granted may assist in this, for the authority now have power to acquire substandard property and repair and adapt it to prevent it lapsing too rapidly into uselessness. These powers might be used as a means of fairly quickly housing some families who might have an indefinite wait for Council house.

Infectious disease has not been a major problem, There is an indication that Whooping cough immunization has 'caught on' and that the combined pertussis-diphtheria antigen is increasingly popular. This is important because rural areas tend to lag behind the cities in ridding themselves of infectious diseases.

Food poisoning has not been a problem, although a large proportion of the population of school age are at risk at canteens, and I pay my tribute to the canteen staffs, the Catering and Health Inspectors of the County that no outbreaks have occurred. At the same time regulations are being prepared which will transform to legal requirements, many of the recommendations of the Public Health Service for years past.

I would like to thank all the officers and staff of the Council for their ever-ready help whenever I have asked for it.

I am, Sirs,
Your obedient servant,



Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS

AREA OF RURAL DISTRICT:	114,329 acres
REGISTRAR GENERAL'S ESTIMATE OF MID-YEAR RESIDENT POPULATION:	12,780
DENSITY OF POPULATION:	0.111 persons per acre
NUMBER OF INHABITED HOUSES:	
PERMANENT	3,794
TEMPORARY	86
CARAVANS, ETC.	22
RATEABLE VALUE OF RURAL DISTRICT:	£41,245.
SUM REPRESENTED BY PENNY RATE at 31/3/54	£175. s17. 1d.

VITAL STATISTICS

<u>Live Births</u>		
<u>Legitimate</u>	Male	102
	Female	<u>95</u>
	Total	<u>197</u>
<u>Illegitimate</u>	Male	4
	Female	<u>8</u>
	Total	<u>12</u>
Total live births		209
Crude Live Birth Rate per thousand estimated population		16.3
Standardized Live Birth Rate per thousand estimated population		17.4
Live Birth Rate, England and Wales per thousand estimated population		15.2

Still BirthsLegitimate

Male	3
Female	<u>1</u>
Total	<u>4</u>

Illegitimate

Male	0
Female	0

Still Birth rate per thousand
live births 1949 - 1953 mean 18.6

Still Births, per thousand live
births, 1954 only 19.1

Still Birth rate, England and
Wales, per thousand live births, 1954 24.0

DEATHS

Males 73

Females 64

Crude Death rate per 1,000
estimated population 10.7

Standardized Death rate per
1,000 estimated population 9.8

Death rate, England and Wales
per 1,000 estimated population 11.3

Distribution of Deaths in Age Groups

Age at Death	0-1	1-4	5-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75 & over
No. of Deaths	5	0	1	0	1	4	9	19	41	68
% of Total Deaths	3.38	0	.676	0	.676	2.7	6.08	12.84	27.71	45.96

Causes of Death at Ages under 65 years.

Years

- 0 - 1 Prematurity (3) Congenital Defect (2)
- 1 - 4 Nil
- 5 - 14 Cerebral Degeneration (1)
- 15 - 24 Nil
- 25 - 34 Meningitis (1) Cardiac (1)
- 35 - 44 Cancer (2) Gunshot (1) Nephritis (1)
- 45 - 54 Cancer (3) Cerebral Haemorrhage (1) Abscess (1)
Lymphadenoma (1) Nephritis (1) Addison's Disease (1)
- 55 - 64 Cancer (5) Cardiac (4) Nephritis (1) Cerebral
Haemorrhage (2) Goitre (1) Bronchitis (1) Pernia (1)
Pneumonia (1) Lung Abscess (1) Diabetes (1) Epilepsy (1)

Maternal Mortality

Since 1945 there has been no maternal death and in the same period 2136 children have been born.

Causes of death as shown in the Registrar General's short list

Short
List

No.	Cause of Death	Male	Female	Total
1.	Tuberculosis, Respiratory	0	1	1
2.	Tuberculosis, other	0	0	0
3.	Syphilitic disease	0	0	0
4.	Diphtheria	0	0	0
5.	Whooping Cough	0	0	0
6.	Meningococcal infection	0	0	0
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis	0	0	0
8.	Measles	0	0	0
9.	Other infective and Parasitic diseases	0	0	0
10.	Malignant Neoplasm, stomach	2	1	3
11.	Malignant Neoplasm, lung, bronchus	4	1	5
12.	Malignant Neoplasm, breast	0	3	3
13.	Malignant Neoplasm, uterus	0	2	2
14.	Other Malignant and lymphatic Neoplasms	12	8	20
15.	Leukaemia, Aleukaemia	1	0	1
16.	Diabetes	1	3	4
17.	Vascular Lesions of nervous system	10	10	20
18.	Coronary disease, angina	9	8	17
19.	Hypertension with heart disease	1	1	2
20.	Other heart disease	8	6	14
21.	Other circulatory disease	4	3	7
22.	Influenza	1	0	1
23.	Pneumonia	1	3	4
24.	Bronchitis	4	5	9
25.	Other diseases of Respiratory System	0	1	1
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	0	0	0
27.	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	0	0	0
28.	Nephritis and Nephrosis	1	0	1
29.	Hyperplasia of prostate	2	0	2
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	0	0	0
31.	Congenital malformations	1	0	1
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	9	8	17
33.	Motor Vehicle Accidents	1	0	1
34.	All other accidents	1	0	1
35.	Suicide	0	0	0
36.	Homicide and operations of war	0	0	0
TOTAL		73	64	137

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

<u>Disease</u>	<u>Notifications</u>	<u>Deaths</u>
Pneumonia	17	3
Scarlet Fever	18	0
Tuberculosis (Respiratory)	3	0
Tuberculosis (Other)	0	0
Measles	15	0
Whooping Cough	77	0
Food Poisoning	1	0
Dysentery	1	0
Erysipelas	3	0
Diphtheria	1	0
All others	0	0

As is usual none of the deaths from pneumonia occurred in persons under 65 years of age.

The case of diphtheria is interesting proof that this disease is not yet abolished and needs no more than a continued negligence by all concerned to attack the large proportion of the child population who are again becoming susceptible.

Scarlet fever, although still notifiable, takes a very mild form and rarely causes more than a few days incapacity. Its interest lies in the route of spread - in one outbreak almost certainly due to inadequate heating and ventilation in temporary school buildings.

Only one case of food-poisoning was reported, but others occurred in a rural district, and were both mild and scattered, they may easily have escaped recognition.

Whilst domestic food storage accommodation is bad in many rural dwellings, the primary defence for the public is continued pressure for improved protection of food prior to it reaching the consumer.

New national regulations will shortly come into force to reinforce our efforts in this direction.

Measures for Control of Infectious Diseases

The following figures are given by the County Medical Officer of Health

Diphtheria Immunization	Under 5 years	5 - 14 years				Boosting Doses
(1954)	132		12			153
(1953)	132		5			104
Whooping Cough Immunizations (Under 5 years)	Under One	One	Two	Three	Four	Total
	32	53	19	12	5	121
Combined Diphtheria and Whooping Cough Immunizations (Under 5 years)	Under One	One	Two	Three	Four	Total
	6	1	1	-	1	9
	Under One	1-4	5-14	15 & Over	Total	
Vaccinations	79	12	1	8	100	
Re-Vaccinations	-	3	5	7	15	

Figures are now included for the use of combined diphtheria-whooping cough. This is increasingly in favour since there is a public demand for protection against whooping cough, and is to be recommended in a rural area where additional journeys are thereby eliminated.

Tuberculosis

A review of notifications and deaths over the past eight years is interesting.

	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	Average 1947-54
Pulmonary Notifications	7	5	2	2	9	5	1	0	3.875
Non-Pulmonary Notifications	4	3	5	1	5	0	1	0	2.375
Total Deaths	1	2	5	3	2	2	3	0	2.25

The housing survey was limited to houses already in class 4 and 5. Of these a few had been replaced and a few had disappeared, whilst some had merely sunk a little lower in the scale.

I must quote and reiterate a passage from my previous annual report

"Tuberculosis is a disease of poverty and bad housing. In pre-war years both were rife in Lincolnshire. In the war and post-war period the increase in relative prosperity has not often been passed on to the unskilled families amongst whom the disease is most common. The housing of the rural district was shown in the 1947 survey to be far from satisfactory - one house in five was fit only for reconstruction or demolition. Of these houses many were and are tenanted by the poorer worker who, with lower earnings and less skillful use of their time and resources and able to make their homes less habitable than a more skilled worker could have done had he been forced to live in such a place.

A fresh housing survey is soon to begin and in planning any replacement or reconditioning of houses, attention should be given to the needs of poor families who will need adequate but perhaps simpler accommodation than the average, and who may be unable to pay the rent of a normal council house without so depriving them of resources that their nutrition fails and tuberculosis is encouraged."

In view of the stringent restriction of Government aid for new housing, attention should be given, whenever possible to maintaining in repair all dwellings which tolerably approach the required standards.

Nevertheless, some dwellings are in such poor condition that their continued use should be discontinued as soon as possible.

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES

No changes have been made in this district other than to introduction of the County Council's Scheme for anti-whooping cough immunization.

The limiting factor in the efficiency of the service is predominantly the sparseness of population, so that although clinic and hospital services are available in the larger centres, it is not easy for all who need attention to get to them.

Chronic hospital accommodation is lacking in this as in other areas, but I have found the hospital authorities very co-operative where there has been an emergency for admission.

In co-operation with Lincoln Ears, Nose and Throat Department the Education authority has started systematically checking hearing of all 7 - 8 year old children and worth while results are already apparent.

I feel, however, that to check hearing is not enough and that there should be a full examination of this age group in school.

National Assistance Act, 1947
as amended

No cases have been brought before the Council during 1954.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES
OF THE DISTRICT

Housing

Little can be added to what has been said. A considerable number of defects were dealt with by the Sanitary Inspector's informal help. The figures given are probably less than the actual ones, in as much as advice is so freely given that often one omits to record an 'inspection'.

Water Supply

No improvement was made to the water situation during the year and little help can be obtained from neighbouring undertakings.

A start was made on preliminary work in connection with a comprehensive water scheme and, at the time of writing, many miles of pipes, big and small are already laid or are by the roadside in readiness.

It is necessary to emphasize, however, that there ought to be no vast programme of conversion of earth closets, etc, to water carriage for as yet disposal of so great a flow of sewage would be impractical.

Sewage Disposal

A new and up to date sewerage scheme for Wragby was commenced in 1954 and completed and brought into operation the following year.

Extensions to the disposal plant at Coningsby were authorized but not actually started during the year.

Refuse Collection

This remains as in the previous year and the sparseness of population is a big obstacle to any wide extension of the 'urban' type of scavenging.

REPORT OF WORK DONE BY SANITARY INSPECTOR
FOR THE YEAR 1954.

TOTAL NUMBER OF NEW HOUSES ERECTED DURING THE YEAR	78
(i) By the Local Authority	53
(ii) By other Local Authorities	-
(iii) By other bodies or persons	25

INSPECTION OF DWELLING-HOUSES DURING THE YEAR

(1)(a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts	365
(b) Number of inspections for the purpose	435
(2)(a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head(1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	-
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be unfit for human habitation	230
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be fit for human habitation	27

REMEDY OF DEFECTS DURING THE YEAR WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by local authority or their officers	143
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ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING THE YEAR

(a) Proceedings under Sections 9 & 10 of the Housing Act, 1936:-	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	-
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:	
(a) by Owners - (b) by Local Authority	-
(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts:-	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	1
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notice:-	
(a) by owner 1 (b) by Local Authority	-

- (c) Proceedings under Sections 11 & 13 of the Housing Act, 1936
- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made 2
 - (2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders -
 - (3) Number of dwelling-houses subject to undertakings or Closing Orders 3
- (d) Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936
- (1) Number of separate tenements or under-ground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made -
 - (2) Number of separate tenements or under-ground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or rooms having been rendered fit -
- (e) Proceedings under Sections 25 & 26
- (1) Number of Clearance Orders made -
 - Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance thereof -

HOUSING ACT, 1936 - PART IV - OVERCROWDING

- (a) (i) Number of dwelling-houses overcrowded at the end of the year not known
- (ii) Number of families dwelling therein not known
- (iii) Number of families dwelling therein not known
- (b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year 4
- (c)(i) No of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year 4
- (ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases 27
- (d) Number of houses again overcrowded after being previously relieved -

HOUSING ACT, 1949

- (a) Number of applications for grants received 33
- (b) Number of grants made 33
- (c) Number of applications for grants made by Local Authority -

MOVABLE DWELLINGS, TENTS, VANS, etc.

- Number of site licences -
- Number of individual licences 22
- Number of inspections during the year - Sites -
- Dwellings 30
- Number of contraventions remedied 2

FOOD PREMISES

Bakehouses

Number in district	13
Number of inspections	20
Number of Contraventions	1
Contraventions remedied	1

Milk Supplies

Number of distributors on register	4
- Sterilized	2
- Pasteurized	2
- Non-Designated	1
- T.T.	2

Ice-Cream

Number of manufacturers on register	2
Number of premises licenced for sale of ice-cream	36
Number of inspections of premises made	38
Number of contraventions found	-
Contraventions remedied	-
Number of samples taken:	None

Meat Products

Number of premises licenced for the manufacture of meat-products	19
Number of inspections made	10
Number of contraventions found	-
Contraventions remedied	-

Other food premises

Number of inspections	16
Number of contraventions found	-
Contraventions remedied	-

UN SOUND FOOD

	Cattle Excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed (if known)					
Number inspected	406	52	12	1202	790
All diseases except T.B. Whole Carcasses condemned	1				1
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	12	4		18	25
Percentage of number inspected affected with disease other than T.B.	3.3	8		.071	3.5
Tuberculosis only Whole carcasses condemned Carcass of which some part or organ was condemned	28	1 9			39
Percentage of the number inspected affected with T.B.	7	20			5

Other Foods Condemned

2 x 28 lbs Pastry Margarine
1 x 10 lbs - ditto -
4 x 1 lbs Steamed Steak
6 lbs Shoulder of Bacon

Method of disposal of condemned food :-

Meat - Stained and collected for making into animal
feeding stuffs etc.
Other foods - Buried

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

Closets

Number of houses with privy vaults in district	not known
Number of houses with pail closets in district	not known
Number of pail closets repaired	11
Number of water closets substituted for dry receptacles	19
Number of houses with water-closets in district	not known
Number of water closets repaired	24

Drains

Drains examined, tested, exposed, etc	64
Drains unstopped, repaired, etc	46

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal

New lengths of sewer laid	Part of Wragby Scheme
New sewage disposal works provided at-	Work started at Wragby
Details of improvements to existing works	Nil
Any part of the District urgently requiring public sewers and/or treatment works for public health reasons	-

Cesspools

Cesspools, emptied, cleansed, etc.	391
Cesspools abolished	14

Water Supplies

New sources of supply - public	-
New sources of supply - private	-
Number of supplies closed as polluted	-
Number of houses supplied from public mains	..
- on premises	not known
- standpipe	not known
Number of houses supplied from private sources	
on premises	not known
- standpipe	not known

Nuisances

Total number of nuisances during the year	109
(1) abated as result of informal action by Sanitary Inspector	109
(2) Reported to Council - Statutory Notice issued	--
- " " not issued	--

Details of nuisances abated

	After informal intimation	After Statutory Notice
Smoke	Nil	Nil
Accumulation of refuse	24	Nil
Foul ditches, ponds and stagnant water	14	Nil
Fowls, pigs and other a animals	13	Nil
Dampness	27	Nil
Drainage	26	Nil
Other nuisances	5	Nil

Rats and Mice Destruction

Number of rodent operatives employed	1
Number of premises treated (a) dwelling-houses	336
(b) other premises	132
Are there any serious reservoirs of rats in the district?	Yes

